For instance, if someone abuses you, troubles you or provokes you, than you have two ways of responding. One way is to give a 'tit for tat' response. That is, just as you have been troubled, you likewise trouble the other person by abusing him, troubling him or harming him. So in times of provocation, you retaliate in like manner.

One who retaliates in this way develops a negative personality. He grows within him a harvest of thorns. In the eternal world of 'tomorrow' after death, he will emerge as a thorny personality; he will then be put in a jungle of thorns and will spend the rest of his life eternally grief-stricken and frustrated.

Whosoever wants to have a 'flowery' personality will have to activate his mind whenever he has a negative thought so as to convert it into a positive thought.

A quite different type of person is one who responds in a positive manner to negative situations. Others may abuse him, but he himself will not abuse anyone. Others may torment him, but he will not torment others. He may be harmed, but he will not harm others. Others may provoke him, but he himself will not provoke anyone.

This is the man who lives like a flower amidst the thorns. He discovers God while He is unseen in this world and lives a God-oriented life of positivity. He takes the situation as an opportunity to take blessings from God and builds within himself a personality like a flower. So he will be given the opportunity to live in the Garden of flowers after death in the eternal world of paradise.

How do we build a 'Flowery' Personality?

There are two major parts of the human brain. One is the conscious mind and the other is the unconscious mind. When a thought enters the human mind, it does so initially in the conscious mind. Gradually, in due course, it reaches the unconscious mind. The unconscious mind is the part where every thought is preserved forever, although that is not in the grasp of man's conscious mind. Whosoever wants to have a 'flowery' personality will have to activate his mind whenever he has a negative thought so as to convert it into a positive thought. Consequently, in the next stage when this thought moves on to the unconscious mind, it is stored as something positive rather than negative.

Those men and women who succeed in building such a personality will find that the store of their consciousness will be a treasury of positivism. It will be completely free of negativism. It is positive personalities such as these who will receive a place in the Garden of flowers in the eternal world after death – Paradise – where they shall spend their lives in a perpetual state of joy and bliss.

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The Ideology of Life

The Ideology of Life

Man is born with an inquisitive nature. This is what differentiates him from other species and life forms. Since, he is endowed with a reasoning faculty, he cannot help but question the activities and phenomena that take place around him. He remains restless unless he finds rational answers to questions pertaining to the *Ideology of Life* such as: Who am I?, Where did I come from?, What is the purpose of my life?, Why do I have so many desires?, Is life governed by destiny or free will?, Why is there suffering in the world?, Does God exist?, How do I achieve salvation?, Why shouldn't I only live for today?, What happens after death?... The questions are many, however, the answer is only one – a reason-based understanding of man's purpose as per the ideology of life.

According to the Islamic concept of the ideology of life, man is a pleasure-seeking animal. He has an abundance of desires and thus seeks to create a world where he may fulfil all of them. Yet there is no one who can achieve that goal; everyone is destined to die with desires unfulfilled.

This destiny, however, is special to man — no other creature shares this fate. As is known, the physical world, the mountains, the rivers, the stars, etc. have no desires at all, and this saves them from the problem of unfulfilled desires.

Everyone is destined to die with desires unfulfilled.

Why this tragic state-of-affairs? The reason for this is that man has unlimited intellectual capability but physically he is a limited being. This disparity in his inner nature causes the problem.

Ideology of Man's Life

After great labour, man acquires much wealth but he dies without completely enjoying it. He builds his dream house. Yet sadly, upon entering it, he feels unable to fully enjoy it due to his limitations and disadvantages. Any conceivable thing that he obtains is inherently imperfect whereas man is intellectually a perfectionist. After experiencing each new goal that he has so long sought to achieve he desires it no more because after achieving it he realises that this latest goal too, is less than perfect.

Man's life is actually like an iceberg. This limited worldly life is only the tip of the iceberg and the eternal other-worldly life will be like the hidden majority of the iceberg.

There is hope in this situation. If nature was capable of creating a world that satisfies man's physical needs then logically it must be capable of creating a world that suits his intellectual needs.

Thus there is no need for man to fall prey to frustration. All that man needs to do is adopt a two-fold plan for his life. One based on his needs of the present world and the other according to his needs of the future world.

So a successful life in this world is one based on the following concept: that the present life is where we can only sow and we shall harvest in the next world. If we were to plant a seed in the morning with the hope of enjoying the fruit by dinnertime, we are sure to be frustrated. Had we planned to reap the fruit a hundred years from now, however, then we would not meet any frustration for frustration is but the name of misplaced hope. The problem for man thus lies not in the nature of life but in his understanding of the ideology of his life. If man were to live his life understanding that he is sowing the seeds in this life and he will enjoy its fruits in the after-life he will never fall prey to frustration.

Flowers and Thorns

Today's limited world is like a jungle. We have flowers as well as thorns in it. In the eternal world of 'tomorrow', the flowers and thorns will be separated from each other and a final eternal world will be made in which one part will consist only of thorns — hell, while the other part will consist only of flowers — paradise.

That the present life is where we can only sow and we shall harvest in the next world.

The conditions of today's world are actually a means of preparation of the human personality. God has created this world as a testing ground. He has given man a free-will and is getting a record made of his thoughts, speach and actions. At this very moment, two groups are being formed; one of thorns and one of flowers, and every man is showing, from the record of his life, for which group he has qualified himself — the thorns or the flowers.